

RESEARCH ARTICLE



**A STUDY OF THE MODERNISM ELEMENTS IN WILLIAM FAULKNER'S SHORT STORY, "A ROSE FOR EMILY"**

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**ABSTRACT**

Before surveying the main stream of the topic, in order to clarify the topic, it should be briefly discussed that this short story was written in the setting of time in 1930 and of place in a small town in the southern part of the US called Jefferson. M. H. Abrams in his book of "A Glossary of Literary Terms" writes that the term modernism is used to identify features in the subject, form, concept, and style of literature and other arts in the early decades of the twentieth century (118). Modernism Started at the turn of the twentieth century. Most critics believed "high modernism" came to exist after World War I (119). That was the time of economics and technological progress, and the time of industrialization. The societies experienced the fundamental changes which were unavoidable to the number of people. The main important change was the change against the traditional rules of living. The aim of this paper is to study the elements of modernism in William Faulkner's short story, "A Rose foe Emily". The elements such as contradictions between the old and the new era society at the time of the happening in the story, the form which the author uses as the stream of consciousness, the first point of view narration, and the change which is obviously determined in the realm of the society. In modernism writing, cold machinery and increased capitalism are seen that led to solidarity of people and alienated individual.Industrialization and globalization are highly recognized in this era.

**Keywords:** Contradiction, Modernism, Stream of Consciousness, William Faulkner

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## INTRODUCTION

At first, talking about the author can be essential to go through the topic. William Faulkner was born in New Albany, Mississippi, 1897. He became Famous from the set of novels that explore the South's historical legacy, fraught and violent present. His works are usually rooted in his fictional city in the county of Mississippi, Yoknapatawpha. This setting which was the microcosm of the south he imaginarily knew it very well. He could look into as binoculars which he could go through the society and people. He was particularly interested in the moral implications in the history. It - "A ROSE for Emily"- was first published on April 30, 1930. This is the time of the high modernism with the rise of its elements. Faulkner once called it a "ghost story". The story includes the tension between the US North and South, changing world order complexities, harsh social constraints for women. Shortly, this is a story of an unchangeable modern-time woman who draws the readers' attention in the portrait of aberrant psychology and necrophilia in the dank and dusty world of the protagonist, Emily Grierson (Azizmohammadi and Kohzadi 134). A traditional text is usually written in the sequence of happenings. As Aristotle mentioned, the order of a unified plot is a chronological happenings of beginning, middle, and end. The beginning is the main action that makes readers follow the story more interestingly; the middle presumes what has occurred in the past and requires something to end; and the end comes after all the occurrences to sum up and finish the story (Abrams 161). In contradiction to modern texts, the story does not grow in the linear form mentioned. The action passes through a character's awareness. It is the flow of thought, perception, and feeling. The narrator tells the story unorderedly. Beginning is the end and vice versa. This way of narration – Stream of Consciousness - first was used by William James in his Principles of Psychology (Abrams 202).

## DISCUSSION

This short story contains five sections. In the first section, it is the time of Emily's death and the attendance of the townspeople to the funeral. The narrators talks about the conflict between Emily and the "new generation" on the tax notices they send and she is not willing to pay due to the Colonel

Sartoris, the town's previous mayor who suspended Emily's tax after her father's death, because once he had loaned to the city. In the next section, it is flashbacks thirty years ago. The time when her father has already dead and she has just abandoned by her beloved man. In section three and four, after her father's death, the summer after. She was sick for a long time. The streets were being paved by new contracts with a northerner, Homer Baren who was Emily's beloved. She poisoned and murdered him. Many years pass until her death. And in the last section, it is the funeral ceremony taking place and later when the secret is revealed after forty years when Homer was disappeared. According to Schwab, William Faulkner told the story after Emily's death in a series of flashbacks to show time standing still for Emily. The narrator seeks through the character's mind and shifts the sign as an element of a modernism text. Another remarkable form of writing which is a significant form of modernism text is the use first person narration while it is not usually seen in the traditional ones.

By investigating the theme of the story – tradition versus change – it can be discussed about the monuments represented in the story. When Emily dies the whole town went to the funeral of a "fallen monument. Emily is muted and mysterious person. She tends to live her life on her own way and generally she is adored especially by the men in the town. She lives in her solidarity because she cannot accept the changes of the modern life. Everybody in the town has changed; showing this in the story by paying taxes and the radical changes to the figure of the town by paving the sidewalks and the new buildings. Emily's father always controlled her and after his death, Emily did so. She wanted to be loved and accepted by Homer. She is unable to make a way to possess him and just when she is ignored, she takes the control of him by killing and keeping the dead body next to herself in an upstairs room. By killing and keeping him she achieves the complete power over him. Emily's house is a monument, too. As the narrator says in the first part of the story, "only Miss Emily's house was left". All the city appearance has been modified except this building which "had once been white", has remained in its own traditional style. It was "decorated with cupolas and spires and scrolled

balconies in the heavily lightsome style of the seventies" – 1870s. By the time of the story, the street and the neighborhood have lost their old standing as the realm of the elite. Only this house was "lifting its stubborn and coquettish decay". Another form of change which is obvious in the town is the industry side of the modern world. Industrialization has been much modernized as "the cotton wagons and the gasoline pumps" are seen in the society at times. Another form that is in contradiction to Emily is the new mayors and aldermen who are the "new generation" with "more modern ideas". This made her be dissatisfied. She avoids accepting the modern life. Even with the progress of the post industry, she rejects the installing the mailbox, as we have in the text: "When the town got free postal delivery, Miss Emily alone refused to let them fasten the metal numbers above her door and attach a mailbox to it" (Azizmohammadi and Kohzadi 139).

#### CONCLUSION

For all this, it is necessary to mention that the main purpose of this paper was to clarify the techniques used by the author. We reach a conclusion on this point that William Faulkner used the first person narration and the stream of consciousness, and some contradictions between modern life and traditional life as modernism elements. The so called modern-time is compared with the late traditional aspects of life. Change is a way, a progress, and even an irony that is shown in the text. There is only one truth ruled by the aldermen may be as capitalists that an unchangeable figure does not admit it. All this shows the complexity of modern urban life; and disillusionment.

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